

Forum for Democratic Reforms

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Dear

Ever since the existing bill was first introduced and made known to the public, some of us have been pointing to its serious flaws and appealing that it be improved, if women are to actually benefit from reservations. Unfortunately, even well-meaning suggestions for improvement have not been heeded by the government before they tabled the bill in parliament during the last session. The present bill will not only harm women's position in politics but is also capable of destroying our already fragile democracy. Therefore, some of us have taken the initiative to draft an alternate, more workable Women's Reservation Bill. This requires amending the Representation of People's Act, a much simpler proposition. The existing sarkari bill requires amending the constitution, a far more complex and long drawn out process which can actually result in scuttling the present bill for a longer period.

We are attaching our critique of the existing bill as also the alternative bill we have drafted. Also enclosed is a statement that you might want to endorse and return to us, either by email or by post, as soon as possible at one of the three given addresses. We would like our alternative bill debated along with the existing one in the forthcoming session of parliament.

If you find this proposal worthwhile, please introduce it to others who might also be interested in endorsing this effort.

Looking forward to an early response.

Jay Prakash Narayan,
Lok Satta, Hyderabad

Dhirubhai Sheth,
Lokayan, Delhi

Yogendra Yadav,
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Madhu Kishwar,
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We the undersigned believe that the present Women's Reservation Bill recently tabled in parliament has serious defects. This flawed Bill, if made into a law, will further undermine the health of our democracy. We therefore, endorse the Alternative Women's Reservation Bill drafted by the **Forum for Democratic Reforms**. We, urge that this Alternative Bill be tabled and debated in parliament along with the current Bill so that the best possible legislation be enacted to facilitate an increase in women's representation in our legislatures.

Name

Institution and Address

Signature